



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913

PH (517) 373.1725 | FAX (517) 373.0741

www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/mcmanus/

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Contact: Patrick Kane
517-373-1725

Governor's veto slams the brakes on speedy justice for residents of Mecosta and Osceola counties

LANSING — Governor Granholm's veto today of House Bill 5479 denies residents of Mecosta and Osceola counties the right to have their cases heard as quickly as possible, Sen. Michelle McManus, R-Lake Leelanau, said.

The bill would have added an additional district court judge in the 77th District, which covers Mecosta and Osceola counties, as recommended by the independent, nonpartisan Michigan Supreme Court's State Court Administrative Office.

Instead the governor has decided to play politics, vetoing the bills because Democrats want more judgeships in Wayne County than the State Court Administrative Office recommended in its 2003 Judicial Resources Report, McManus said. The population of Wayne County, however, has been falling over the past years.

"Governor Granholm is denying the people of Mecosta and Osceola counties their constitutional right to swift justice," McManus said. "These are rapidly growing areas that need an additional judge to address the court's growing docket."

In the 2003 Judicial Resources Report, the administrative office only recommended a circuit or district court add a judgeship if at least two additional judges were needed. The report uses information such as court caseloads and other objective data to determine where judgeships should be added or removed.

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